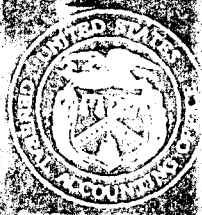


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# DEFENSE PERSONNEL

## Status of Implementing Joint Assignments for Military Leaders



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National Security and  
International Affairs Division

B-241688

January 11, 1991

The Honorable Nicholas Mavroules  
Chairman, Subcommittee on  
Investigations  
Committee on Armed Services  
House of Representatives

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Dear Mr. Chairman:

As you requested, we examined the Department of Defense's (DOD) progress in designating general/flag officer joint duty positions as critical. In response to discussions with your staff, we obtained views within the joint community at the Pentagon on criteria being used for designating these positions as critical.

This report discusses (1) DOD's progress to date in designating general/flag officer joint duty positions as critical, as well as its future plans, and (2) the criteria used for designating critical positions. In October 1990, we briefed your staff on the results of our work, and this report summarizes that briefing.

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## Results in Brief

Progress in designating general/flag officer joint duty positions as critical has been steady over the initial 4 years since the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986. So far, 55 positions, which represent about 20 percent of the total general/flag officer joint duty assignments, have been designated as critical. DOD has established a goal of 50 percent and plans to reach its goal by the end of calendar year 1994.

DOD has in place a process in which the Joint Staff selects, from nominations by joint organizations, critical positions which it believes would benefit most by being filled with joint specialty officers. Designations of critical positions are to be within the grades, numbers, and schedule prescribed in the Joint Staff plan.

## Background

Title IV of the Defense Reorganization Act established a category of officers known as joint specialty officers and a category of positions called critical that can only be filled by such joint specialists. On December 4, 1987, the law was amended, stipulating that "a substantial

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portion" of joint duty assignments for general/flag officers shall be critical positions.

According to the House of Representatives conference report on the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal years 1988 and 1989, the language "a substantial portion" was used because the conferees were unable to determine the specific percentage that should be prescribed. While the conferees believed that significantly more than 50 percent of general/flag officer joint duty positions should be designated as critical, the conferees expected the next year's comprehensive examination of the joint officer policies to allow Congress to prescribe a more specific goal based on information provided by DOD. While Congress has not prescribed a specific goal, in hearings before the Investigations Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee on May 18, 1989, a DOD participant and the Subcommittee Chairman agreed that a substantial portion means 50 percent.

## Progress and Future Plans

The Defense Reorganization Act became law on October 1, 1986, and DOD published its first joint duty assignment list in 1987. The list has been revised three times since then—in 1988, 1989, and 1990. Each year critical general/flag officer positions have been added, as shown in table 1.

**Table 1: Growth in Critical General/Flag Officer Positions**

Year	Critical positions	
	Number	Additions
1987	11	*
1988	22	11
1989	35	13
1990	55	20

\*Not applicable.

The joint duty assignment list for fiscal year 1990 contained 280 general/flag officer joint duty positions, with 55, or approximately 20 percent of the general/flag officer joint duty positions, designated as critical.

In February 1990 the Secretary of Defense established policy to designate general/flag officer positions as critical and a goal to designate 50 percent of the general/flag officer joint duty positions as critical by the end of calendar year 1994. In April 1990 the Joint Staff presented a plan to increase the positions designated as critical to 135, as shown in

table 2. The plan also states that the actual increase in 1994 will be adjusted to achieve the 50 percent goal.

**Table 2: General/Flag Officer Critical Positions**

Year	Officer levels				Total	Additions <sup>a</sup>
	O-7	O-8	O-9	O-10		
1989	3	7	10	15	35	
1990	8	16	14	17	55	20
1991	13	25	18	19	75	20
1992	20	34	22	19	95	20
1993	27	43	26	19	115	20
1994	35	51	30	19	135	20
<b>Total joint positions</b>						
	137	83	34	19	273	

<sup>a</sup>Baseline year for DOD plan.

## Criteria and Process Used for Designating Critical Positions

The designation of critical positions changes as the Defense Reorganization Act is amended and those amendments are interpreted. While initial general/flag officer critical positions were designated by the act itself, today additional critical positions are being recommended by the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, in accordance with the goal established by the Secretary of Defense. The Joint Staff role is to coordinate and negotiate the designation of additional critical positions with the joint commands (users), seeking balance among the services in order that the level of critical positions can be consistently staffed.

Title II of the Defense Reorganization Act stipulates that the positions of Vice-Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and combatant commanders are to be filled by officers who have the joint specialty and have served in a joint duty assignment as a general/flag officer, unless these requirements are waived by the President. As of September 1, 1990, 10 combatant commands existed. As such, 11 general/flag officer positions currently are designated as critical in accordance with the act. Appendix I lists these positions. In 1988 another 11 positions were designated as critical and are also listed in appendix I.

By November 9, 1988, a pool of 661 general/flag officers had received the joint specialty officer designation. At that time, the Joint Staff began working with joint organizations to identify additional general/flag officer positions as critical. The Joint Staff requested joint organizations to identify suggested positions for the critical designation. Guidance to do so was also provided. For example, critical joint duty assignment

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positions, at a minimum, should be those that would significantly benefit by being filled with a joint specialty officer to bring heightened knowledge and experience of the joint arena to the activity. As for the number of critical positions, Joint Staff guidance stated that the number should be at a level whereby the positions can be consistently staffed and established a DOD target of 12-14 general/flag officer positions for designation as critical in 1989. See appendix I for the 13 critical positions designated in 1989.

According to Joint Staff officials responsible for general/flag officer matters, nominations for suggested critical positions received for 1989 exceeded the number needed for that year. The additional positions were enough to select the positions for 1990 as well. They also stated that the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, designated that his position be included as a critical position in 1990. See appendix I for the 20 positions designated as critical in 1990. These positions were the first installment of the Joint Staff's plan to meet the Secretary's goal of 50 percent. It calls for 20 per year through calendar year 1993 with the balance to be added in calendar year 1994 to equal 50 percent of the total joint general/flag officer positions.

While Office of the Secretary of Defense officials have received service support regarding the number of positions to be designated as critical and Joint Staff officials have determined the numbers by grade level, neither group of officials identified specific positions that either would or would not be designated as critical. These officials agreed that the positions to be designated as critical would not be hierarchical, but rather would be proportionally shared by the providers.

Joint Staff officials said that they have to choose the positions to be designated as critical in order to attain a proportional balance and maintain the list's credibility. In 1988, for example, when the Joint Staff sought nominations, the European Command did not designate its Director of Operations (J-3) as a critical position while the other commands did, according to a Joint Staff official. According to this official, the European Command's reason for not wanting to designate that particular position as critical was to avoid limiting the choice of officers who could serve in that position in the future. The Command wanted the freedom to select from among all possible candidates and not be restricted to joint specialists. However, the Joint Staff did designate that position as critical. The Joint Staff explained that doing so enhanced the

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credibility of the list, since other commands had designated that particular position as critical. Appendix II lists the number of positions designated as critical by organization, and appendix III shows which positions within the unified and specified commands are designated as critical.

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## Scope and Methodology

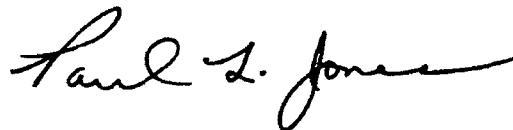
We obtained data and views from joint officials in the Offices of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff. We conducted our work between July and October 1990 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. As requested, we did not obtain formal agency comments; however, we did discuss the matters contained in this letter with joint officials during the course of our review and have incorporated their comments where appropriate.

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Unless you publicly announce its contents earlier, we plan no further distribution of this report until 30 days from its issue date. At that time, we will send copies to the Chairmen, House Committees on Armed Services, Appropriations, and Government Operations; the Chairmen, Senate Committees on Armed Services, Appropriations, and Governmental Affairs; the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Director, Office of Management and Budget; and other interested parties. We will make copies available to others upon request.

Please contact me on (202) 275-3990 if you or your staff have any questions concerning this report. The major contributors to this report were George E. Breen, Jr., Assistant Director, and William J. Wood, Evaluator-in-Charge.

Sincerely yours,



Paul L. Jones  
Director  
Defense Force Management Issues

# Critical General/Flag Officer Positions by Year

## 1987, Stipulated by Law

Vice-Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
 Commander-in-Chief, Atlantic Command  
 Commander-in-Chief, Central Command  
 Commander-in-Chief, European Command  
 Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Command  
 Commander-in-Chief, Southern Command  
 Commander-in-Chief, Space Command  
 Commander-in-Chief, Special Operations Command  
 Commander-in-Chief, Transportation Command  
 Commander-in-Chief, Forces Command  
 Commander-in-Chief, Strategic Air Command

## 1988 Additions

Director, Joint Staff  
 Director, Defense Communications Agency  
 Director, Defense Intelligence Agency  
 Director, Defense Logistics Agency  
 Director, Defense Security Assistance Agency  
 Director, National Security Agency  
 Director, Strategic Defense Initiative Organization  
 Commander, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe  
 Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Forces-Korea  
 Commander-in-Chief, Air Force South  
 U.S. Representative, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Military Command

## 1989 Additions

Director, J-3 Operations Directorate, Joint Staff  
 Director, J-4 Logistics Directorate, Joint Staff  
 Director, J-5 Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate, Joint Staff  
 Director, J-7 Operational Plans and Interoperability Directorate, Joint Staff  
 Director, Defense Mapping Agency  
 Director, Defense Nuclear Agency  
 Director, J-4 Logistics Directorate, Central Command  
 Director, J-5 Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate, Central Command  
 Director, J-5 Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate, Space Command  
 Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Southern Command  
 Deputy Commander, U.S. Forces-Japan  
 Director, J-3 Operations Directorate, U.S. Forces-Korea  
 Deputy Adviser, U.S. Mission NATO

## 1990 Additions

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
Assistant to Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
Director, J-6 Command, Control, and Communications Systems  
Directorate, Joint Staff  
Director, J-8 Force Structure, Resource and Assessment Directorate,  
Joint Staff  
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Military Manpower and  
Personnel Policy  
Deputy Commander-in-Chief, European Command  
Vice Director, Joint Strategic Targets Planning System  
Director, J-3 Operations Directorate, Atlantic Command  
Director, J-5 Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate, Atlantic Command  
Director, J-3 Operations Directorate, Central Command  
Director, J-3 Operations Directorate, European Command  
Director, J-5 Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate, European Command  
Director, J-3 Operations Directorate, Pacific Command  
Director, J-5 Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate, Pacific Command  
Director, J-3 Operations Directorate, Southern Command  
Director, J-3 Operations Directorate, Special Operations Command  
Director, J-5 Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate, Special Operations  
Command  
Director, J-3 Operations Directorate, Space Command  
Director, J-3/4 Operations/Logistics Directorate, Transportation  
Command  
Deputy Military Representative, NATO Military Committee



# General/Flag Officer Critical Positions by Organization

Organization	Number
Secretary/Deputy Secretary of Defense	0
Office of the Secretary of Defense	1
Chairman/Vice Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff	3
The Joint Staff	7
Specified commands	3
Unified commands	25
Defense agencies	8
Other	
Forces commands (Allied Power in Europe, Japan, Korea)	4
Military representatives/advisers to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)	3
Component Commander-in-Chief	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>

# Distribution of Critical Positions in Specified and Unified Commands

Organization	CINC <sup>b</sup>	Positions			
		Deputy CINC	Director <sup>a</sup>		
			J-3	J-4	J-5
Specified commands					
Strategic Air Command	X	X			
Forces Command	X				
Unified commands					
European Command	X	X	X		X
Atlantic Command	X		X		X
Pacific Command	X		X		X
Central Command	X		X	X	X
Southern Command	X	X	X		
Special Operations Command	X		X		X
Transportation Command	X			X <sup>c</sup>	
Space Command	X		X		X

<sup>a</sup>J-3 deals with operations, J-4 deals with logistics, and J-5 deals with strategic plans and policies.

<sup>b</sup>Commander-in-Chief.

<sup>c</sup>J-3 and J-4 units are combined at this command.